East-West Rail Corridor

629. SHRIMATI SUKHBUNS KAUR: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether during the recent visit of Japanese Prime Minister, a Japanese proposal to build a $ 5 billion east west rail corridor between Delhi and Mumbai and Delhi and Howrah to promote India's infrastructure was discussed;

(b) if so, how the corridor would be operated and how the cost would be shared; and

(c) the details of the decision taken and the steps being taken in pursuance thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) During the recent visit of Japanese Prime Minister in April 2005, both India and Japan confirmed their intention to examine the feasibility of proposals for dedicated multi-model high axle load freight corridors with computerized train control system on Mumbai-Delhi and Delhi-Howrah routes utilizing the Special Terms for Economic Partnership (STEP) Scheme with inputs of Japanese technology and expertise. Ministry of Railways as a follow up has assigned a detailed feasibility study to M/s RITES, a public sector enterprise under this ministry.

New Harsood Railway Station

† 630. SHRI P.K. MAHESHWARI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the New Railway Station at Chhanera is proposed to be named as 'New Harsood' by Madhya Pradesh Government after the old Harsood station submerged under water;

(b) the action taken by the Government, so far, in this regard; and

(c) by when the procedure of naming the Chhanera Station as New Harsood would be completed?

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) A proposal regarding renaming of new railway station Chhanera as "Naya Harsood Railway Station" was received from Government of Madhya Pradesh.

(b) and (c) As per the extant procedure, renaming of the station is done by the Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India on the recommendation of the State Government. Ministry of Railways will take appropriate action as and when the approval of Ministry of Home Affairs is received.

Travelling in AC coaches at the cost of sleeper class

†631. SHRIMATI KUM KUM RAI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to provide an opportunity of travelling in A.C. coach to passengers at the cost of sleeper class;

(b) if so, the details of the scheme;

(c) the details of profit and loss which would be incurred by railways by introducing this scheme; and

(d) by when the scheme is proposed to be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R.VELU): (a) The scheme for upgradation of passengers against the vacant accommodation available in Upper Class is under examination, consistent with the provisions of the Railways Act, 1989.

(b) and (c) Details of the scheme are yet to be finalised.

(d) Implementation Schedule will be decided only after the scheme is approved.

Freight Authority

†632. SHRIMATI KUM KUM RAI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to set up a tribunal named Freight Authority;

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.